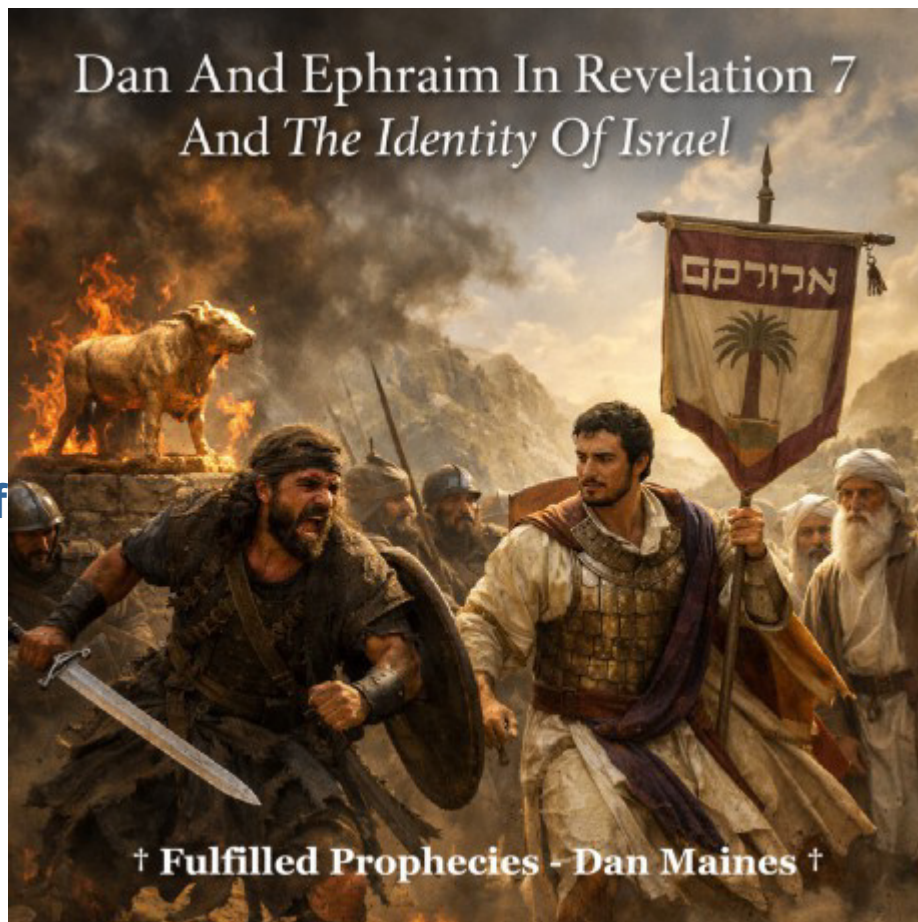


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Dan And Ephraim In Revelation 7 And The Identity Of Israel



By Dan Maines

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Introduction

† Many have noticed that when we come to Revelation 7:5-8, the tribal list is not the same as the Old Testament listings, and that is not accidental, it is intentional (Revelation 7:5-8).

† Dan is missing, Ephraim is not named, and yet Levi appears, and Joseph is listed alongside Manasseh, which immediately tells us we are not dealing with a simple land-based tribal

registry (Numbers 18:20; Genesis 48:5).

† What we are seeing is a covenantal, purified, and fulfilled Israel, not a geographic or genealogical reconstruction of Old Covenant tribes (1 Peter 2:5).

† This fits perfectly with the fulfilled reality in AD 70, where the Old Covenant order passed away and the true Israel of God stood complete in Christ (Hebrews 8:13).

Genesis 48:5

And now thy two sons, who were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee into Egypt, are mine; Ephraim and Manasseh, even as Reuben and Simeon, shall be mine.

† Jacob adopted Joseph's two sons as his own, giving them full tribal status in Israel (Genesis 48:5).

† This is where Ephraim and Manasseh come into the tribal structure, not as replacements of Israel, but as part of it (Genesis 48:5; Joshua 14:4).

† This is important because it shows Ephraim never became Israel itself, he was counted within Israel (Genesis 48:5).

Genesis 48:14, 19

And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger... And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great: howbeit his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.

† Ephraim was the younger son, yet received the greater blessing, which is why he later becomes prominent among the tribes (Genesis 48:14, 19).

† That prominence is what leads some to say Ephraim became Israel, but the text never says that, it says he would become great within Israel (Genesis 48:19).

† The blessing does not change identity, it establishes influence, not replacement (Genesis 48:19; Genesis 49:22-26).

Hosea 4:17

Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.

† In the prophets, especially Hosea, Ephraim is often used to represent the northern kingdom of Israel (Hosea 4:17; Hosea 5:3).

† This is where the idea comes from that Ephraim became Israel, but it is a representational usage, not a literal renaming of the nation (Hosea 5:3; 2 Kings 17:6-8).

† Ephraim became the leading tribe of the northern kingdom, so his name stood for the whole, but he never replaced Israel itself (Hosea 4:17).

† This also explains why Ephraim's name becomes tied to rebellion and idolatry, leading to judgment (Hosea 4:17; Hosea 8:8).

Revelation 7:5-8

Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand; Of the tribe of

Naphtali twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand; Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

† Dan is completely absent from this list, which immediately signals a deliberate omission, not an oversight (Genesis 49:17).

† Ephraim is not named directly, but is represented under Joseph, which shows a reshaping of tribal identity rather than a literal genealogical listing (Genesis 48:5).

† Levi being included proves this is not about land inheritance, since Levi had no inheritance in the land under the Old Covenant (Numbers 18:20).

† This list is theological, not territorial, showing a purified covenant people, not a return to tribal geography (Galatians 6:15-16).

Genesis 49:17

Dan shall be a serpent in the way, An adder in the path, That biteth the horse's heels, So that his rider falleth backward.

† Dan is associated with deception and judgment from the beginning, which becomes significant later in Israel's history (Genesis 49:17; Judges 18:30-31).

† The tribe of Dan led Israel into idolatry, setting up graven images, which directly violates covenant faithfulness (Judges 18:30-31; 1 Kings 12:28-30).

† Because of this, Dan becomes a symbol of apostasy, which explains why he is excluded from the sealed remnant in Revelation (Revelation 7:5-8).

Judges 18:30-31

And the children of Dan set up for themselves the graven image... So they set them up Micah's graven image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

† This shows clearly that Dan established idolatry within Israel, not temporarily, but as an ongoing practice (Judges 18:30-31).

† This is not minor error, this is institutionalized rebellion within the covenant people (Judges 18:30-31).

† This directly explains why Dan is excluded in Revelation, God does not seal idolatry (Revelation 7:5-8).

1 Kings 12:29

And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan.

† Dan became one of the central locations of Jeroboam's golden calf system, making it a headquarters of apostate worship (1 Kings 12:29).

† This ties Dan directly to the official false worship system that led Israel into judgment (1 Kings 12:28-30).

† This strengthens the reason for Dan's omission, he represents organized rebellion against God (Revelation 7:5-8).

1 Peter 2:5

ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a

holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

† The New Testament defines Israel as a spiritual house, not a physical tribal system tied to land (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:19-22).

† This confirms that Revelation 7 is not about ethnic tribal restoration, but about the completed people of God in Christ (Galatians 3:28-29).

† The 144,000 represent the fullness of covenant Israel brought to completion, not a future literal tribal census (Revelation 7:4; Romans 9:6-8).

Galatians 6:15-16

For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

† The Israel of God is defined by new creation, not by physical descent or tribal identity (Galatians 6:15-16).

† This confirms that the true Israel is spiritual and fulfilled in Christ, not a future ethnic restoration (Galatians 6:15-16; Romans 9:6-8).

† This aligns perfectly with Revelation 7, where the list reflects a purified covenant people (Revelation 7:5-8).

2 Kings 17:6-8

In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away unto Assyria... And they walked in the

statutes of the nations...

† The northern tribes, led by Ephraim, were judged and scattered because of idolatry (2 Kings 17:6-8; Hosea 8:8).

† This historical judgment explains why their identity is not preserved in the same way in Revelation (Revelation 7:5-8).

† God is not restoring rebellion, he is establishing a purified people (Malachi 3:2-3).

Ezekiel 37:19

Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim... and I will make them one stick, and they shall be one in my hand.

† The reunification of Israel is shown as a single people in God's hand, not a divided tribal system restored later (Ezekiel 37:19).

† This is fulfilled in Christ, where Jew and Gentile are brought together into one body (Ephesians 2:14-16).

† This again confirms Revelation 7 is about unity and fulfillment, not tribal restoration (Revelation 7:5-8).

Historical References

† Josephus records the corruption and idolatry of the northern tribes and their eventual destruction, showing the seriousness of their apostasy (Antiquities of the Jews, Book 9).

† Irenaeus noted that the tribal listings in Revelation are symbolic and not strictly genealogical, recognizing the

theological purpose of the list (Against Heresies 5.30).

† Eusebius confirms that the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 marked the end of the Old Covenant system and its tribal distinctions (Ecclesiastical History 3.5).

How It Applies To Us Today

† We are not looking for a future tribal restoration, we are living in the fulfilled reality of God's completed people in Christ (Galatians 3:28-29).

† The omission of Dan and Ephraim shows that God does not preserve rebellion, he removes it and establishes what is faithful (Revelation 7:5-8).

† Our identity is not in physical descent but in Christ, who has brought together all into one spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5).

† The 144,000 is not about future speculation, it is about the completed covenant people revealed at the end of the Old Covenant age in AD 70 (Revelation 7:4; Hebrews 12:22-24).

Q & A Appendix

Q Why do some say Ephraim became Israel?

A Because Ephraim represented the northern kingdom in the prophets, but that is representational language, not a literal identity change (Hosea 4:17; Hosea 5:3).

Q Why is Dan missing from Revelation 7?

A Dan was associated with idolatry and apostasy, which is why he is excluded from the sealed remnant (Judges 18:30-31; Genesis 49:17).

Q Why is Ephraim not listed?

A Ephraim became identified with rebellion and idolatry, so he is represented under Joseph without using the corrupted name (Hosea 4:17; Genesis 48:5).

Q Does this prove the tribes are not literal?

A Yes, the inclusion of Levi and Joseph, and the omission of Dan and Ephraim, shows a theological, not genealogical list (Revelation 7:5-8; Numbers 18:20).

Q Who are the 144,000?

A They are the complete covenant people of God, the true Israel, brought to fulfillment at the end of the Old Covenant age (1 Peter 2:5; Galatians 3:28-29).

Q If Ephraim became prominent, why would God avoid using his name?

A Because Ephraim became identified with idolatry and rebellion, so God preserves the lineage under Joseph but removes the corrupted name (Hosea 4:17; Revelation 7:5-8).

Q Why is Joseph listed instead of Ephraim?

A Joseph represents both Ephraim and Manasseh, allowing inclusion of the lineage without honoring the name tied to apostasy (Genesis 48:5; Revelation 7:5-8).

Q Why is Levi included if this is about tribes?

A Levi had no land inheritance, so his inclusion proves this is not a land-based tribal list but a spiritual and covenantal one (Numbers 18:20; Revelation 7:5-8).

Q Does the omission of Dan mean he is completely lost?

A No, it shows that the sealed remnant represents faithfulness, not every physical descendant, God preserves what is faithful (Romans 9:6-8; Revelation 7:5-8).

Q Why would God remove certain tribal names?

A Because the list reflects a purified covenant people, not a historical registry, names tied to rebellion are excluded (Hosea 4:17; Revelation 7:5-8).

Q Is Revelation 7 about the Old Covenant tribes returning?

A No, the structure of the list shows transformation, not restoration, it points to fulfillment in Christ (Galatians 6:15-16; 1 Peter 2:5).

Q How do we know this is not future?

A Because the context of Revelation places these events as near and at hand, fulfilled in that generation (Revelation 1:1; Matthew 24:34).

Q Why is Manasseh listed but not Ephraim?

A Manasseh did not carry the same prophetic association with

rebellion as Ephraim, so his name remains while Ephraim is represented under Joseph (Genesis 48:5; Hosea 4:17).

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Genesis 48:5, 14, 19; Hosea 4:17; Revelation 7:5-8; Genesis 49:17; Judges 18:30-31; 1 Kings 12:29; 1 Peter 2:5; Galatians 6:15-16; 2 Kings 17:6-8; Ezekiel 37:19

† Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book 9; Irenaeus, Against Heresies 5.30; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5

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